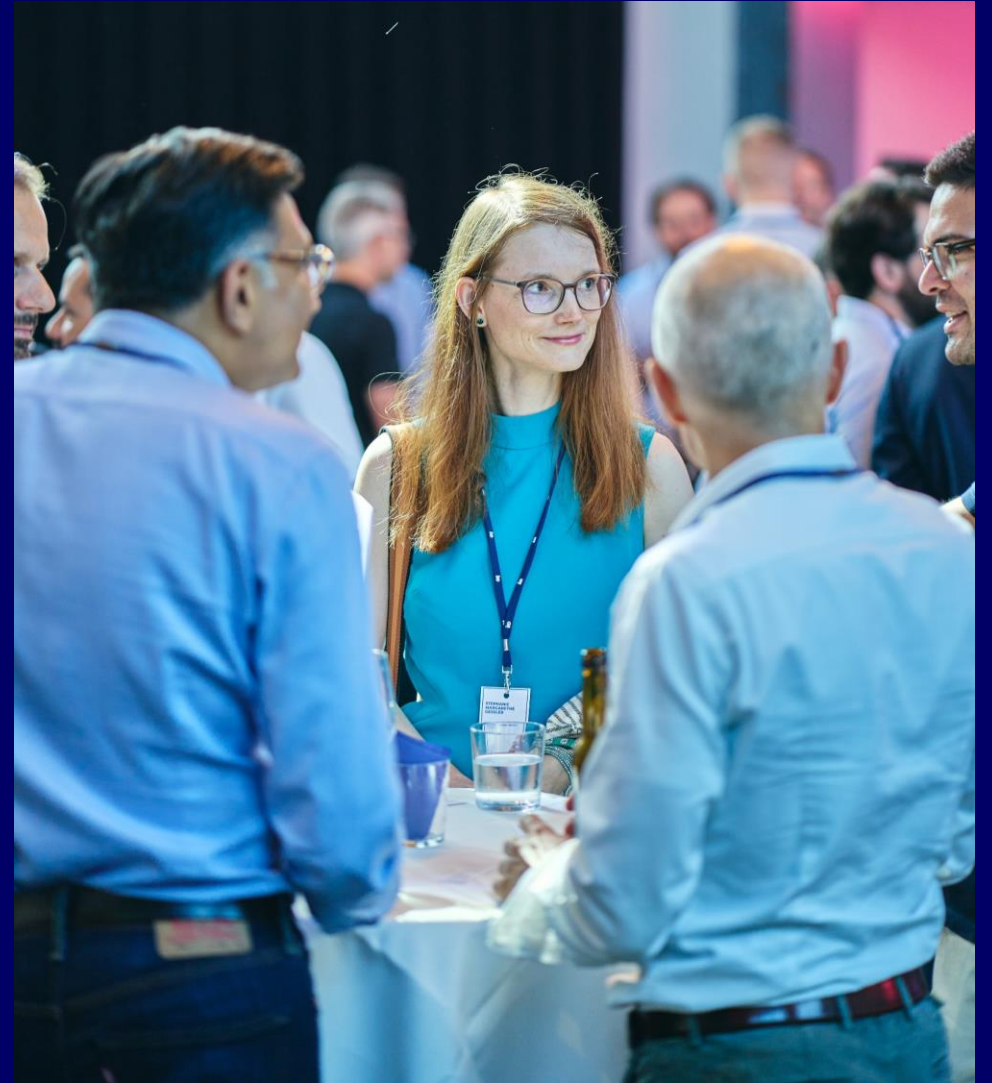


STRUCTURED NETWORKING NIGHT TOOLKIT

For internal purposes only
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OVERVIEW

WHY DO WE OFFER STRUCTURED NETWORKING NIGHTS?

Structured Networking Nights were created to **help alumni make relevant connections for their careers.**

Benefits of Structured Networking Nights:

- Career-focused, increasing value for attendees
- Takes the guessing game out of networking by steering alumni towards those who share their
 - Industry
 - Job Function
 - Years of Experience
- Speed-style rounds help attendees make multiple new connections and prevent them from getting stuck in just one conversation

EVENT STRUCTURE

HOW DOES IT WORK?

At a glance, Structured Networking Nights are professional networking events in which alumni with shared interests and experiences are connected through three speed-style rounds.

Round 1: **Sector**

Round 2: **Job Function**

Round 3: **Years of Experience**

Please note: Finishing with years of experience helps manage attendees' expectations by allowing attendees to spend more time with their peers. This is especially important for senior professionals.



VENUE SELECTION

Venue selection is extremely important since **the right physical space can enable great conversations and connections**, while the wrong space can create challenges that negatively impact the experience for participants.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. Is the venue conveniently located and easy to find?
2. Does the venue have good acoustics?
3. Does the venue offer a microphone and speakers?
4. Can I easily create the desired amount of networking areas?
5. Does the venue have the furniture I need or do I need to rent it from a separate provider? (e.g. cocktail tables)



CATERING SELECTION

Bitesize appetizers that don't require plates and utensils to eat are the best foods to opt for, as they complement the activity, rather than distracting from it.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

1. Does the catering service offer options for people with common allergies or intolerances such as gluten free, vegetarian, etc?
2. Does the catering service (or venue) provide necessities like wine and beer glasses, napkins, etc?*
3. Does the catering service (or venue) offer you staff to help pour drinks, pass food, etc?*

*Never make assumptions! Some venues, like co-working spaces, do not provide these things



NETWORKING AREAS

HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR EVENT TO FOSTER QUALITY CONNECTIONS

1. Build additional questions into your registration page
2. Use attendee responses to determine breakdown of networking tables/areas for each of the three rounds

Things to consider:

- Is there any dominant sector or job function that deserves its own area because of its size?
- What industries and job functions make sense to combine at one table/area?

Tip: If you need help, ask ChatGPT to help you sort the responses and label the networking areas.



ICE BREAKERS

KICKSTART CONVERSATIONS WITH QUESTIONS RELATED TO EACH ROUND

Consider preparing some ice breaker questions as an optional conversation aid for attendees. You can either do this by printing out questions on paper slips (as seen in photo) or display a slide of questions related to each round on a screen (preferred option).

Sample questions:

1. Are there any current trends or innovations in our industry that have caught your attention?
2. What are the greatest challenges you are facing as a young, mid-level, or senior profesional?



KEEPING ALUMNI CONNECTED

HOW TO BE HELPFUL AND GDPR COMPLIANT

Alumni often request the guest list or contact info of other attendees after the event so think ahead and find creative ways to be helpful, while also respecting our data protection obligations.

One thing you can do is show attendees how to pull up their **profile QR code on LinkedIn** and encourage them to connect in the moment. You can either share this tip in the pre-event email, as they are checking in, or both!



HOW TO FIND YOUR LINKEDIN QR CODE

MARKETING

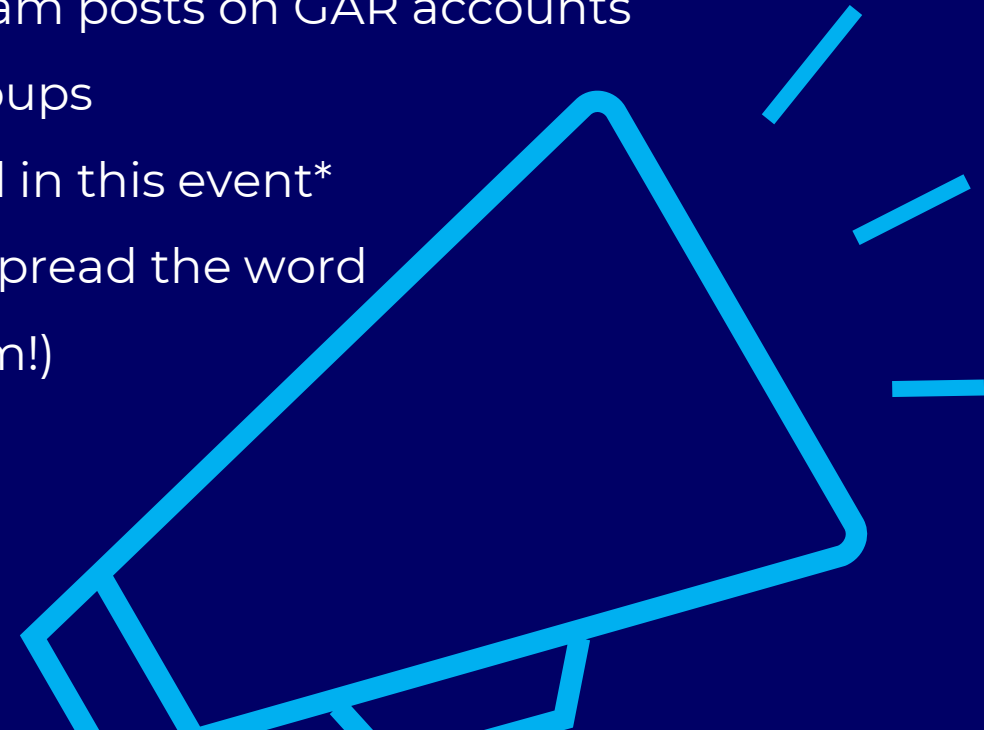
HOW TO DEVELOP AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY TO REACH ATTENDEES

Your marketing campaign should be **multi-channel** and **targeted to your target population** as efficiently as possible. Think: where do the alumni I serve get their news about IE events?

Consider doing one or more of the following:

- Preparing a targeted email
- Posting on LinkedIn and/or requesting LinkedIn or Instagram posts on GAR accounts
- Sharing the invitation via relevant WhatsApp/Telegram groups
- Sending direct messages to alumni who may be interested in this event*
- Asking other colleagues in touch with alumni to help you spread the word
- Other (if you have more channels at your disposal, use them!)

*Curate the event by strategically inviting guests who will make the networking more interesting

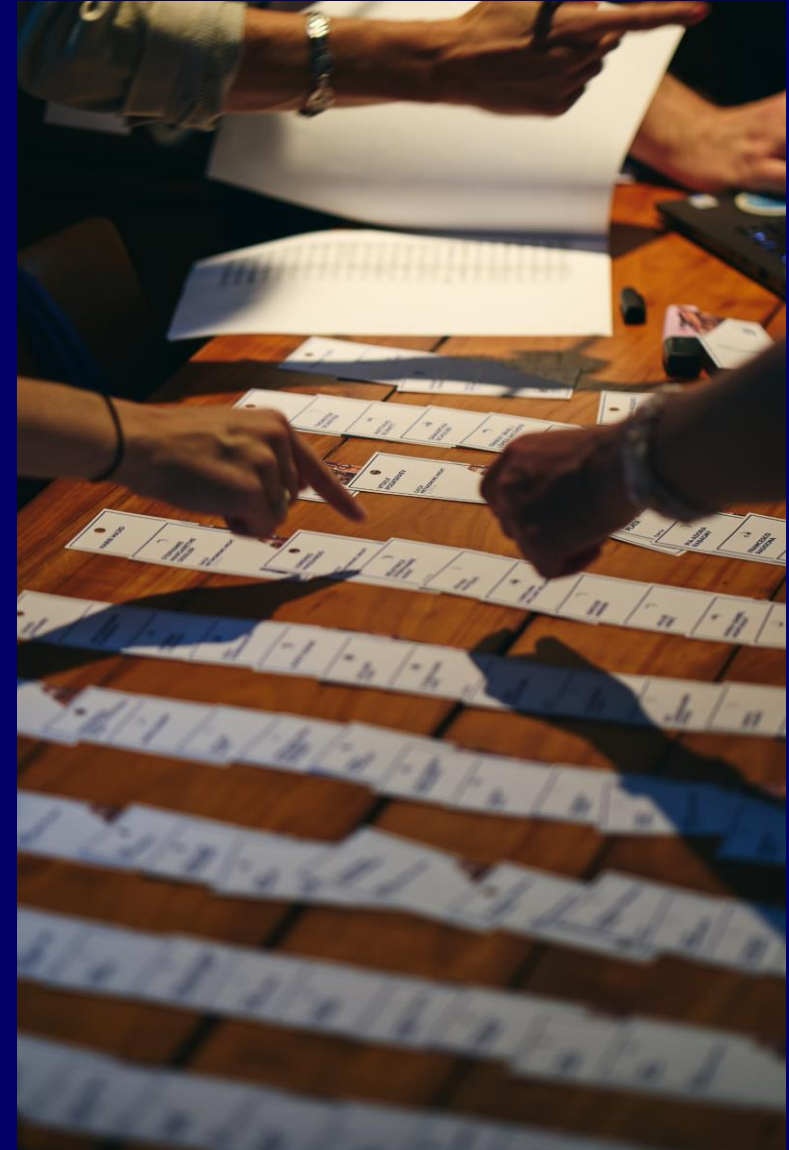


CHECK IN PROCESS

ENSURE A SMOOTH CHECK IN FOR ALL ATTENDEES

1. Recruit check-in help (IE staff, alumni club leaders, other)
2. Pre-print nametags or have materials available so that attendees can make their own
3. Make sure you have a stable wifi connection and a plan B!*

*While it is recommended to use the IE Connects app for check in, it is a good idea to have a computer charged up and even a printed guest list as a back up



HOSTING YOUR EVENT

THE ROLE OF THE HOST

As the host, there are a number of things you will need to do or delegate to others during the event. They are:

1. Provide welcome remarks
2. Share alumni and/or institutional updates
3. Give instructions as to how the networking rounds will work
4. Keep the time (15 minutes per round), change the table cards, and announce transitions between rounds
5. Assist attendees who need help choosing what area to network in
6. Conclude structured networking and let attendees know how they can spend the remainder of the event time



CHECKLIST

STEPS TO FOLLOW TO EXECUTE A SUCCESSFUL FLASH MENTORSHIP EVENT

- ☐ Reserve venue
- ☐ Reserve catering (through venue or other provider)
- ☐ Reserve AV equipment (if applicable)
- ☐ Book photographer (optional)
- ☐ Create/update event flyer
- ☐ Publish event on IE Connects
- ☐ Conduct multi-channel marketing campaign
- ☐ Order nametags
- ☐ Determine networking areas and print table cards
- ☐ Prepare ice breakers (printed or in PPT form)
- ☐ Recruit help with check in
- ☐ Send reminder email to participants, asking them to re-confirm their attendance
- ☐ Prepare welcome remarks/updates
- ☐ Manage invoices and ensure providers are paid
- ☐ Send “Thank you” email with link to survey